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ABSTRACT

This publication is a guide to assist librarians in taking a proactive stance to include families of children with special needs in programs and services. The focus is on families with children up to age five, and covers the basic principles underlying inclusion, family-centered service, resource-based practice, and the provision of library services to families and children with special needs. This manual has a practical bias, and the outlined strategies and methods focus on communication skills, competencies, adaptations, collaborations, networks, training, programs, and collection development. The first section, "Understanding Inclusive Practices," covers inclusion and the benefits of inclusion for all families and the public library; outlines the laws and regulations that support inclusion; and addresses principles of family-centered service and resource-based practice. The second section, "Getting Your Library Ready," deals with assessing the readiness of your library and staff; communicating with parents of special needs children; collaboration for success; and guidelines for adapting your library. The third section, "Developing Collections and Services," discusses collection development; learning through play and toy-lending services; parent and professional resource centers; and electronic resources. Four appendices include: a bibliography of 130 print and audiovisual materials; a list of developmental milestones for infants and young children; contact information for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Coordinators; and information on the New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council's Library-Based Parent Resource Center Initiative. Contains an index.(DLS)

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